

SYMPHONY HALL
BOSTON

BACH'S
PASSION MUSIC

BY THE
HANDEL AND HAYDN
SOCIETY

THOMPSON STONE, Conductor



FRIDAY EVENING
MARCH TWENTY-NINTH, 1929

Passion Music According to St. Matthew

BY

BACH

SOLOISTS:

JEANNETTE VREELAND, Soprano
NEVADA VAN DER VEER, Contralto
ARTHUR KRAFT, Tenor
RULON ROBISON, Tenor
FRED PATTON, Bass
JAMES R. HOUGHTON, Baritone

Boy Choir from the Country Day School

The Chorale Choir in the balcony is composed of singers from the Wellesley Hills Woman's Club and singers from the Apollo Club of Boston, trained by Mr. William S. Self and conducted by Lawrence White.

Boston Symphony Orchestra Players

Organist, WILLIAM BURBANK

CHICKERING PIANO

Foreword

To many people the world over, the figure of Christ means divinity on earth in the guise of man. To others, He is but an historic personage;—to others, a myth. All three groups, however, unite in their keen interest in His life and death. All three classes further have in common the love for the divine music which came from somewhere into the mind of Johann Sebastian Bach, and which he set down on paper to the words of Matthew the Disciple.

It is easy in the first chorus to picture the solitary figure moving through the streets with the excited crowd shouting; and the great calm of the chorale setting of the *Agnus Dei* sung by the boy choir appearing through the shouts of the riotous multitude. From this chorus to the final note of the last chorus, there is, thanks to the eloquent music of the great master, no difficulty in following the story from the mouths of the narrator, the disciples, the commentary of the arias and chorales, and the words of Christ Himself.

Note:—It is with regret that the great length of this work makes it necessary to omit sections; especially the great Fantasia on the Chorale "O Man, Bewail Thy Sin so Great."

It is requested that there be no applause during the evening in order to contribute to the continuity, solemnity, and dramatic effectiveness of this work.

THE PASSION

ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

PART I

PROLOGUE

DOUBLE CHORUS

Come, ye Daughters, share my anguish,
See Him! Whom? The Bridegroom see;
See Him? How? So like a lamb;
See it! What? His love untold!
Look! Look where? on our offence!
Look on Him, betrayed and sold,
On the cruel cross to languish.

CHORALE

O Lamb of God most holy,
Who on the cross did languish;
O Saviour, meek and lowly,
Who suffered bitter anguish,
The sins of man Thou bearest,
Our ev'ry grief Thou sharest,
Have mercy on us, O Jesu.

The Announcement of the Passion

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

When Jesus had finished all these sayings, He said to His disciples: Ye know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man shall be deliver'd up to be crucified.

CHORALE

O blessed Jesu, how hast thou offended,
That now on Thee such judgment has descended?
Of what misdeed hast Thou to make confession?
Of what transgression?

The Rulers Conspire Against Christ

RECITATIVE (Tenor)

Then assembled the chief priests and the scribes together, and the elders of the people unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas; and they consulted how they Jesus by craft might take and kill Him. They said, however:—

DOUBLE CHORUS

No, not on the feast, for fear there may be an uproar among the people.

The Treason of Judas

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

Then one of the twelve disciples, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said: What will ye give me, if I to you deliver Him? And they offer'd him thirty silver pieces. And from that time sought he opportunity, that he might betray Him.

ARIA. (Soprano)

Only bleed, Thou dearest heart!
Ah! A child of Thine upbringing,
To Thy breast for nurture clinging
Coiling there, the snake accursed
Stings where it was fondly nursed.

The Preparation of the Passion

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

Now on the first day, of the feast of unleaven'd bread came the disciples to Jesus, and said unto Him:—

CHORUS

Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Passover?

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

He said: Go ye into the city to such a man, and say to him: The Master saith to thee: My time is at hand; I will keep at my house the Passover, with my disciples. The disciples did as Jesus had appointed, and made ready the Passover.

The Last Supper

And when evening came, He sat down with the twelve and as they did eat, He said: Verily, I say to you: One of you shall betray Me. And they grew exceedingly sad, and they began, ev'ry one of them to say unto Him:—

CHORUS

Lord, is it I?

CHORALE

'Tis I, my sins betray Thee,
Oh, foully I repay Thee,
On me they ought to fall.
The torture Thou art feeling,
Thy patient love revealing,
'Tis I that should endure it all.

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

He answered them, and said: He who his hand with Me in the dish hath dipped, even he shall betray Me. The Son of Man goeth now away, as of Him it hath been written; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man hath been betrayed! It had been better, yea better for him if he had not been born. Then answered Judas, he that betrayed Him, and said: Lord, is it I? He said unto him: Thou sayest.

The Institution of the Eucharist

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is My Body. And He took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: Drink ye all of it; this is My Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. I say to you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.

RECITATIVE. (Soprano)

Although my eyes with tears o'erflow,
Since Jesus now must from us go,
His gracious promise doth the soul uplift,
His Flesh and Blood (O precious gift)
Doth He bequeath into my hand.
As He while in the world did love His own,
So now with love unchanging,
He loves them still unto the end.

ARIA. (Soprano)

Never will my heart refuse Thee,
Dwell in me, my Life, my All!
Evermore in Thee I'll lose me
If for Thee the world be small,
Thou to me art more than all,
More than worlds, my Heaven, my All.

At the Mount of Olives

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

And when they had sung a hymn of praise together, they went out into the Mount of Olives. Then said Jesus unto them: This very night ye shall be offended because of Me. For it hath been written: I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But when I am risen again, then I will go before you into Galilee.

Peter's Denial Foretold by Christ

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

Peter then answered, and said unto Him: Tho' all men be offended because of Thee, yet I will never be offended. Jesus said unto him: Verily I say unto thee, that this night, ere yet the cock croweth, thou wilt thrice deny me. Peter said unto Him: Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee. And likewise said also all the disciples.

CHORALE

Here will I stay beside Thee,
Lord, do not me disdain!
Whatever woe betide Thee,
Here steadfast I remain.
When bitter pain shall hold Thee
In agony oppress,
Then, then will I enfold Thee
Within my loving breast!

The Agony in the Garden

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

Then came Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples: Sit ye here, while I go yonder and pray. And He took with Him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then said Jesus to them: My soul is very sad, e'en unto death; tarry here, and watch with Me.

SOLO (Tenor) WITH CHORUS

O grief! Here throbs the racked and bleeding heart.
It sinks away; how pale His countenance!
Before the judge He must appear;
No comfort, ah! no helper near!
Yea, all the pains of Hell assail Him,
Nor will His innocence avail Him!
Ah! could my love for Thee avail,
Thy pain to mitigate, or share it,
Or could I only help Thee bear it,
How gladly so dear a task I'd hail!
Why must Thou suffer all these pangs of sorrow?
Ah! From my sins they all their sting do borrow!
Mine, ah! Lord Jesus, mine the guilt, I own it:
Must Thou atone it?

SOLO (Tenor) WITH CHORUS

I would beside my Lord be watching.
Then laid to rest our sins will be!
For my sake
He to die will undertake,
His sorrows are my joy, my glory.
The griefs that He for us endureth
How bitter yet how sweet are they.

Christ's Prayer in the Garden

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

And He came to His disciples and found them sleeping and said unto Peter: Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away a second time, prayed, and said: My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.

CHORALE

Now may the will of God be done!
His will I would not alter.
His help is near to every one,
Let not our courage falter.
In all our need,
Our Friend indeed,
How tenderly He chideth!
To Him hold fast:
He builds to last
Who still in God confideth.

The Betrayal and Arrest

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

And while He yet spake, came Judas, who was one of the twelve disciples, and with him came a great multitude, with swords and with staves, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now he that betrayed Him had given them a signal and had said: Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is He: Him take ye. And straightway came he to Jesus and said: All hail to Thee, O Master! And kissed Him. Jesus said unto him: My friend, wherefore art thou come? Then instantly they came, and laid hands on Jesus, and took Him.

Christ is Bound and Led Into the City

DUET (Soprano and Alto) WITH CHORUS

Alas! my Jesus now is taken.
Moon and stars
Have in sorrow night forsaken;
For my Jesus now is taken.
He's led away, ah! they have bound Him.
Away, away, all pity banished!

Ye lightnings, ye thunders, in clouds are ye vanished?
Then open, O fierce flaming pit, all thy terrors
Engulf them, devour them, destroy them, o'erwhelm them,
In wrathfullest mood.
O! blast the betrayer, the murderous brood!

INTERMISSION

PART II

PROLOGUE

In the Court of Caiaphas

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

And they that had laid hold on Jesus led Him away to the high priest called Caiaphas, with whom all the scribes and the elders were assembled.

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

And the high priest answered and said unto Him: I adjure Thee by the living God that Thou tell us, whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said unto Him: Thou sayest. Yet I say unto you: Henceforth, 'twill come to pass, that ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his garments, and said: He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need of witness? Behold, now ye have heard the blasphemy yourselves. What think ye? They answered him, and said:—

DOUBLE CHORUS
He is guilty of death!

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)
And then did they spit in His face, and buffeted Him. Others smote Him with the palms of their hands, and said:—

DOUBLE CHORUS
Now tell us, Thou Christ, by whom Thou art struck?

CHORALE
O Lord, who dares to smite Thee,
And falsely to indict Thee?
Deride and mock Thee so?
Thou canst not need confession,
Who knowest not transgression,
As we and all our children know.

Peter's Denial

RECITATIVE. (Soprano, Tenor and Bass)
Peter was sitting without, in the court; and there came to him a maid, and said: And thou also wast with Jesus the Galilean. But he denied it before them all, and said: I know not what thou sayest. And when he was in the porch, he was seen by another maid, who said to them that were there: This one also was with Jesus of Nazareth, and again he denied it all with an oath: I do not know the man. And after a little while came they that were standing about there, and said unto Peter:—

CHORUS
Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech doth betray thee.

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)
And Peter then began to curse and to swear, I do not know the man. And immediately the cock crew. Then Peter thought about the word of Jesus which said unto him: Before the cock croweth thou shalt deny Me thrice. Then went he out, and wept bitterly.

ARIA. (Alto)
O pardon me, my God,
And on my tears have pity.
Look on me
Heart and eyes do weep to Thee,
To Thee bitterly.

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)
And when the morning came, all the high priests and the elders of the people took counsel on Jesus, to put Him to death. And binding Him they led Him away, and straightway delivered Him to Pontius Pilate, the governor. And presently Judas, he who had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty silver pieces unto the chief priests and elders, and said: Lo! I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood.

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Two Basses)
And he cast down the silver pieces in the temple, and he withdrew, and went and hanged himself.

ARIA. (Bass)
Give me back my dearest Master!
See the price by Judas earned,
Flung down at your feet, and spurned:
Heard ye his disaster?

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)
Then did Jesus stand before the governor; and the governor asked Him, and said: Art Thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered to him: Thou sayest! And when He was accused of the chief of priests and the elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilate said unto Him: Hearest Thou not, how gravely they accuse Thee? And He answered him never a word, not one, so that the governor did marvel greatly.

CHORALE

Commit thy ways, O pilgrim,
On time's dark, stormy seas,
To Him who all things orders,
Thro' sweet eternities,
Who measures out their courses,
To clouds and winds below,
He too will find a pathway,
Wherein thy feet may go.

RECITATIVE. (Soprano, Tenor and Bass)

Now upon that feast, the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. And at that time there was among the prisoners a notable one called Barabbas. And when they were come together, Pilate said unto them: Now whether of the twain here will ye that I release to you? They answered:—

DOUBLE CHORUS

Barabbas

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

And Pilate said to them: And what shall I do now with Jesus, to whom they give the name of Christ? They all said:—

DOUBLE CHORUS

Let Him be crucified!

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

The governor answered: What evil hath He done?

RECITATIVE. (Soprano)

He hath done only good to all.
To blind folk sight He has restored;
The lame again are walking;
He told us of His Father's word,
He driveth devils forth;
The mourners hath He comforted;
In Him a friend the sinner found:
Beside, my Jesus nought hath done.

ARIA. (Soprano)

From love unbounded my Saviour dieth,
For sin He dies, who sin hath none;
Lest the eternal doom, that lieth
Over all beneath the sun,
Be against my soul accounted.

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

Then cried they out all the more, and said:—

DOUBLE CHORUS

Let Him be crucified!

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

And when Pilate saw that all did avail him nothing, but rather a tumult was rising, he took water, and washed his hands before the crowd, and said: I am innocent of the blood of this just man; be it your care.

The Scourging

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

Then he released Barabbas unto them, and when he had scourged Jesus, forthwith he delivered Him, to be crucified.

The Crowning with Thorns

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

Then straightway the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers, and stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe; and, plaiting a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand, and so they bow'd the knee before Him, and mocked Him, and said:—

DOUBLE CHORUS

We hail Thee, King of the Jews!

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

And then they spat upon Him, and with the reed, they smote Him on the head.

CHORALE

O Thou with hate surrounded,
Enduring shame and scorn,
Whose sacred head is wounded,
And crown'd with cruel thorn,
Though praise and adoration
Be now denied to Thee,
And Thine but execration,
Accept them, Lord, from me.

The Way of the Cross

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

And after they had mocked Him, they took the robe from Him, and put His own garments on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

The Crucifixion

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, (that is the place of a skull) they gave Him vinegar to drink, that was mingled with gall: and when He tasted it, He would not drink. And after they had crucified Him they parted His garments, dividing them by lot.

The Death of Christ

RECITATIVE. (Tenor and Bass)

And from the sixth hour there was a darkness over all the land, until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried aloud, and said: Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani! That is: My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me! Some of them that stood there heard Jesus cry aloud, and they said:—

CHORUS

He calleth for Elias

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink. The others said, however:—

CHORUS

Wait, let us see if indeed Elias come to save Him.

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

And again Jesus cried aloud, and departed.

CHORALE

When I too am departing,
Then part Thou not from me.
On death's lone journey starting,
My soul will feel for Thee!
When near my end I languish,
All other comfort vain,
Then draw me out of anguish,
By Thine own woe and pain.

After the Crucifixion

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

And then, behold! the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top unto the bottom. And the earth did quake, and the rocks rent. And the tombs gave up their dead, and there arose many bodies of the saints, that were sleeping, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now the centurion and they that were with him, and were watching Jesus, when they saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, and said:—

CHORUS

Truly this was the Son of God.

The Burial

RECITATIVE. (Tenor)

And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and having rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, he went away.

RECITATIVE. (Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass) WITH CHORUS

And now the Lord to rest is laid,
His task is o'er, for all our sins He hath atoned.

O weary broken body!

See! with repentent tears we would bedew it,
Which our offence to such a death has brought.
My soul shall bless Thee all my days with thousand thanks,
That Thou hast deemed it worth the sacrifice.

My Jesu, rest in peace.

DOUBLE CHORUS

Around Thy throne here sit we weeping,
Hearts turned to Thee, O Saviour blest:
Rest Thee softly, softly rest.
Long, ye weary limbs, lie sleeping.
This cold stone above Thy head,
Shall to many a careworn conscience
Be a sweet refreshing pillow;
Here the soul find peaceful bed.
Closed in bliss divine
Slumber now the weary eyes.



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